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1988/04/20

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United States Senate 8814915

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0950

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 (✓) RELEASE () DECLASSIFY () EXCISE () DECLASSIFY () DENY () IN PART
 The Honorable George Shultz FOIA Exemptions
 Secretary of State Exemptions
 Department of State
 Washington, D.C. 20520

April 20, 1988!!!

IS/FPC/CDR JEW Date: 5/27/88
IN Mk Cases Only:
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PM

NEA

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Last year the Administration established the Missile Technology Control Regime and released Guidelines for Sensitive Missile-Relevant Transfers. The purpose of the Regime and Guidelines was to limit the transfer of missile technology from the United States and certain other countries in an effort to halt the proliferation of intermediate and long range missiles. The Regime and Guidelines were worked out with other governments in recognition that no effort to control such missiles can be effective unless there is international cooperation.

I believe that effort is very important and was therefore concerned when I learned that Saudi Arabia has acquired intermediate range missiles from the Chinese. I recognize that Saudi Arabia has legitimate security interests, especially given the continuing threat posed by the Iran-Iraq war. However, I also am concerned because those missiles are capable of striking other targets in the region, including Israel.

I am aware that a number of my colleagues believe that, as a result of this development, we should re-examine our arms policy with respect to the Saudis and not provide a requested \$450 million support package for the Saudi AWACS. I understand their concern and agree that the Saudi actions must be taken into account as we consider any future arms sales to that government. However, with respect to the support package for the Saudi AWACS, I am concerned that cancellation would have an adverse impact on our own security interests. The United States derives great benefit from the information collected by the Saudi AWACS. Our operations in the Persian Gulf would be made vastly more difficult - and dangerous - without that information. In a crisis, that information would be vital.

Nevertheless, the presence of the Chinese intermediate range missiles in Saudi Arabia does raise serious concerns about the overall balance in the region. I therefore suggest that the United States urge Saudi Arabia in the strongest possible terms to not deploy those missiles and not to purchase any more.

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There is, of course, a certain irony that the Senate is now considering the ratification of the INF treaty - which would permanently ban the United States and the Soviet Union from possessing intermediate range missiles such as those acquired by Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq. These facts demonstrate the importance of the initiative the Administration launched last year to control the spread of such systems.

I urge you to continue to pursue this initiative and the effort to persuade Saudi Arabia not to deploy the missiles or acquire any new ones. I also request that you keep me informed on the progress of your efforts.

(Sincerely,



Sam Nunn
Chairman